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ABSTRACT

This self-assessment guide pinpoints critical elements which a Los Angeles, California, senior high school principal must consider when evaluating how well his or her school is achieving a productive and positive educational environment. The guide is organized into the following parts: (1) a list of the elements critical to an effective senior high school; (2) a list of indicators of excellence, which determine the degree of implementation of the above elements; and (3) the self-assessment instrument which can be used to review the school's progress. A fourth component, the individual school profile, must be added to the other three to achieve a full school assessment. The critical elements considered in the evaluation are the following: (1) direction and purpose; (2) classroom instructional emphasis; (3) dedicated and qualified staff; (4) skilled leadership; (5) counseling emphasis; (6) communication and involvement; (7) student advocacy, involvement, and awareness; (8) positive and safe school climate; (9) parent and community involvement; and (10) regular evaluation of all aspects of the school. (PS)

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A Self-Assessment Process
to Achieve An
Effective
Senior High School

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PREFACE

In administering an effective senior high school, the principal must address certain elements which when implemented with efficiency and personal skill create a productive and positive educational environment.

This document enunciates these elements. They should be carefully reviewed by the principal. The principal should make every reasonable effort to achieve the conditions suggested.

INTRODUCTION

The self-assessment process for a senior high school is a combination of four components.

The Elements of an Effective Senior High School

The first component, The Elements of an Effective Senior High School, identifies the critical characteristics which produce success. The Elements were developed in discussions with the senior high school principals, the Division's Parent Advisory Council, and the Senior High Division staff of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Indicators of Excellence

The second component, The Indicators of Excellence, identifies the measurable quality indicators which can be used to determine the degree of implementation of the Elements.

Self-Assessment Instrument

The third component, The Self-Assessment Instrument, is a means for the principal, the administrative staff, the certificated and classified staff, the parents, the PTA and the Advisory Council to review the progress which the school is making in addressing The Elements of an Effective Senior High School. Findings will assist in school improvement efforts by stimulating discussion of instructional issues, guiding the development of appropriate local improvements, and aiding in the on going assessment process.

The Self-Assessment instrument is a flexible device. It can be used by section to gain opinion about a particular area of interest; it can be reworded to meet a local school interest or need; it can be expanded to reflect local school initiated programs, concerns, and emphasis. The assessment should not be used in such a way as to limit expectations for individual students.

Individual School Profile

The fourth component, the Individual School Profile, provides data on the measurable characteristics which are included in Component 2 or are gathered from other sources. (To be added)

COMPONENT I

The Elements of an Effective Senior High School

Listed below are the critical elements which when implemented will help to create the effective senior high school. The elements are grouped into major categories.

Direction and Purpose

1. An instructional program which evidences congruence defined as a District philosophic framework, course of study guidelines, and evaluation strategies.
2. A philosophical statement of instructional goals developed in each subject area department.
3. Measurable/observable course objectives for each subject.
4. Balanced and comprehensive curriculum offerings.
5. Normative and criteria referenced evaluations.

Classroom Instructional Emphasis

1. A staff development program which emphasizes high expectations within the precise teaching strategies of: objective, rationale, initial activity, guided practice, independent activities, alternate strategies and evaluation.
2. A vertical progression of skills within a subject and throughout all subjects in that subject area.
3. The teaching of language processing.
4. The teaching of application of speaking, writing, reading, listening and thinking skills in content areas.
5. The teaching of higher order intellect skills as part of the precise teaching strategies.
6. The teaching of self-pride and mutual respect.
7. The teaching of values: the contributions of individual ethnic groups, the basic American heritage common to all Americans, the importance of all American ideals including social justice, fair play and brotherhood, and the critical role of public education.
8. An organized plan of classroom visitation and supervision of instruction which fosters both administrative evaluation effectiveness and collegial assistance and support.

Dedicated and Qualified Staff

1. A teaching staff which evidences a cooperative and positive effort toward achieving the philosophy, goals, and objectives and which evidences positive role models as they work to achieve those objectives.
2. A teaching and local school support staff which evidences a sense of purpose and school wide instructional focus evidencing growth in trust and professional respect.

3. A teaching staff which practices precise lesson planning.
4. A diverse ethnic and cultural teacher and administrator staff which can address and relate to a diverse student population.
5. A staff which commits itself to excellence and high expectations and advocates the best interest of students.
6. A staff which has the ability to provide students flexibility when necessary and restraint when necessary.
7. A teaching staff which takes pride and responsibility, individually and collectively, in collecting and processing necessary data in an efficient and organized manner.

Skilled Leadership

1. A principal who:
 - . assumes responsibility for educational quality of all school programs.
 - . initiates or maintains an orderly, organized, and safe climate conducive to teaching and learning.
 - . identifies the principal's role as one of an instructional leader.
 - . demonstrates a commitment to instructional goals by creating a climate of high expectation.
 - . delineates authority of assistant administrators and department chairpersons as their roles relate to curriculum decisions.
 - . demonstrates the importance of effective communication with others.
 - . sets the tone of positive interaction among adults and between adults and students, and demonstrates by actions that successful performance is the result of positive attitudes, self-concepts, and peer relationships.
 - . make decisions once the data is gathered.
2. Individual school site teachers who believe that:
 - . the local school site administrative team is effective and supportive.
 - . the division and district level administrative teams demonstrate conviction regarding the important and critical contributions of teachers to society.

Counseling Emphasis

1. Entry level assessments to evaluate student needs and strengths and the processes to assign students to classes which address the student level of achievement.
2. A counseling program to assist students in their educational efforts.
3. A counseling program which reduces isolation, segregation, tension, and conflict, and which fosters pride, status, motivation, citizenship responsibility, values, and self-worth.

Communication and Involvement

1. A school leadership team composed of administrators, department chairpersons, coordinators, clerical and custodial staff who accept responsibility for their roles as educational implementors.
2. A defined communication network within the school organizational structure to include teachers, students, parents and community support groups.
3. An internal school structure which includes both curriculum and ad hoc committees to assist the administration in setting priorities and direction.

Student Advocacy, Involvement, and Awareness

1. A student population which commits itself to excellence and senses the concept of "student advocacy" among all adult personnel.
2. A student population which senses a caring yet directive staff.
3. A student population that assumes responsibility for and takes pride in the school's history, spirit, appearance, and reputation.
4. A student population that is involved in the operation of the school at the student population level of expertise and responsibility.
5. A student population which is taught to apply logic and group process to solve problems.
6. Planned and systematic programs of recognition of student academic performance.

Positive and Safe School Climate

1. A well-organized and interrelated co-curricular activities program to enhance the primary role of the school.
2. A curriculum which addresses classroom excellence; supervised halls, playgrounds, and perimeters; a safe environment free of vandalism, violence, and illegal substances.
3. A balance of humanness, due process, concern and kindness.

Parent and Community Involvement

1. An adult support base rooted in PTA, School Advisory Council, Booster Groups, community organizations, alumni and informed parent population.
2. A business and industry support base rooted in active advisory groups and adopt-a-school programs.
3. An identifiable community resource base consisting of agencies, public and private service groups.
4. A parent awareness and involvement program fostering improved home-school relationships in the areas of communication, notification, consultation, and cooperation addressing student attitude, attention, attendance, and performance.

An Evaluation Strand

1. A needs assessment cooperatively developed by administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and students leading to statements of philosophy, goals and objectives to meet the instructional needs identified in the assessment.
2. An individual school profile which clearly delineates the present status of the school in base line data and provides the means to evaluate student growth on the curricular continuum from entrance level to exit ability.
3. A set of definable and measurable objectives producing statistics comparable to base line data.
4. A regular review of the equipment, supplies, and instructional technology to determine in what areas improvements must be made.

COMPONENT 2

The Indicators of Excellence

Certain quality indicators when measured for degree and quality of implementation will signify effectiveness of the educational program at the school site.

Direction and Purpose

1. An identifiable District statement of philosophy, goals and objectives.
2. An identifiable course of study framework which includes the philosophy of each subject area and a description for each course in all subject areas. The description should evidence objectives which must be taught.

Classroom Instructional Emphasis

1. An increase in the number of classes in which teachers attest that students speak and write in full sentences, present reports, etc. in standard English.
2. Evidence that teachers teach critical thinking skills to solve problems.
3. Evidence that every teacher is trained in Quality Skill Building.
4. A significant increase in textbook and library allotments and evidence that teachers recognize the increase.
5. Evidence that every student is taking textbooks home for study.

Dedicated and Qualified Staff

1. An increase in the number of state and federal grants allocated to Los Angeles Unified School District personnel.
2. An increase in the number of teachers holding Master Degrees and Doctorates.
3. Evidence of a diverse ethnic, cultural, social, teaching and administrative staff.

Skilled Leadership

1. Evidence that administrators participate in Supervision of Instruction seminars each year.
2. Evidence that administrators visit the classroom and that they have competence in evaluating teacher ability to plan lessons effectively.
3. Evidence that the District has implemented a standard program of teacher evaluation which incorporates sound lesson plans, learning theory and methodology.

Counseling Emphasis

1. An increase in the student enrollment in advanced academic classes.
2. An identified balance in offerings: academic, pre-vocational and vocational.
3. Evidence of a counseling staff which addresses isolation, segregation, tension, and conflict and which fosters pride, status, motivation, citizenship responsibility, values, and self-worth.
4. Evidence of the use of community agencies and resources in assisting students to resolve problems.

Communication and Involvement

1. Evidence that graduated students' performances in their first jobs in business and industry are improving.
2. A program of study which provides the opportunity for students to attain entry level job skills.
3. An increase in the number of programs of articulation with universities - programs designed to occur at the local school site.
4. Evidence that the department/grade level chairs rate their involvement in educational issues as increasing rather than decreasing.
5. Evidence of an adopt-a-school program and other involvement of business and industry personnel in an advisory and/or supportive relationship.

Student Advocacy, Involvement, and Awareness

1. An increase in apportionment attendance.
2. A reduction in non-apportionment attendance.
3. A reduction in the drop-out rate.

Positive and Safe School Climate

1. Evidence that a variety of co-curricular activities are available to meet individual student interest.
2. Evidence that the co-curricular program promotes school spirit.
3. Evidence that halls, playgrounds, and school perimeters are supervised.
4. Evidence of a reduction in violence to students and staff.
5. Evidence of a secure campus.
6. Evidence of a reduction in vandalism.
7. Evidence of a reduction in the distribution of illegal substances.
8. Evidence that students evaluate the staff as kind, concerned and humane.
9. Evidence that the school has a written statement of rights and responsibilities.
10. Evidence that the school has a written statement of student due process.

Parent and Community Involvement

1. Evidence of an active and supportive PTA, school advisory council, booster group, and alumni.
2. Evidence of a business and industry council actively participating in an advisory role.
3. Evidence of an active "Adopt-A-School" partnership.
4. Evidence that information on available community resources is publicized for parents and students information.
5. Evidence of a concerted effort to communicate with individual parents regarding level of student achievement.
6. Evidence of a concerted effort to notify parents of future activities in which they may wish to participate.

An Evaluation Strand

1. An improvement from base data comparisons (as appropriate - District, State, Nation) in the following test areas:
 - . California Assessment Program
 - . California Test of Basic Skills
 - . Advanced Placement
 - . Scholastic Aptitudes
2. Improvement in performance of graduated students at the college level (G.P.A., attrition, etc.).
3. An increase in the number of students who are selected as National Merit Scholars, National Achievement Scholars, and National Hispanic Scholars.
4. An increase in the number of students who take and pass three years of Mathematics, three years of Science, and four years of Foreign Language.
5. An increase in the number of students who take and pass advanced vocational training classes and Regional Occupational Program classes.
6. An increase in the number of students who attain job placement subsequent to taking vocational classes and graduating from high school.

COMPONENT 3

Self Assessment Instrument

Direction and Purpose

Degree of Agreement

	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
1. Instruction is guided by a written District philosophy.						
2. Educational effort is guided by the Superintendent's written goals.						
3. Measurable course objectives are developed for each subject and presented in a <u>Guidelines for Instruction</u> publication.						
4. The instructional program evidences congruence with district policies through a philosophical statement and a vertical progression of skills through the subjects.						

Classroom Instructional Emphasis

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Entry level assessments evaluate student needs and strengths and served as the basis of assigning students to class. | | | | | | |
| 2. A staff development program emphasizes high expectations within the precise teaching concepts of an objective, rationale, initial instruction, guided practice, independent activity, alternate strategies, and evaluation. | | | | | | |
| 3. The teaching of communication skills (speaking, writing, listening, reading) occurs in all content areas. | | | | | | |
| 4. The teaching of higher order thinking skills occurs in all content areas. | | | | | | |
| 5. Evaluation of student performance is in keeping with the district's marking practices policy. | | | | | | |

Degree of Agreement

Classroom Instructional Emphasis (cont.)	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
6. Instructional resources and teaching activities are matched to student developmental levels and incorporated into lesson plans.						
7. Standards of quality for academic work are communicated to students with the expectation that all students will achieve them.						
8. Teachers use assessment results to evaluate students and to determine appropriateness of teaching methods.						
9. Students have regularly scheduled homework assignments.						
10. Textbooks are individually allocated to students.						
11. Library books are in sufficient quantities.						
12. Library facilities are adequate.						
13. Teachers require that students speak and write in full sentences and present reports in standard English.						
14. An organized plan of classroom visitation and supervision of instruction fosters both administrative evaluation and collegial support.						
15. Administrators protect learning time from disruptions.						
16. Procedures for coverage of classes by substitutes are efficient and effective.						
17. The teaching of values occurs in all subjects related to: the contributions of individual ethnic groups, the basic American heritage common to all Americans, the importance of all American ideals including social justice, fair play, brotherhood, and the critical role of public education.						

Degree of Agreement

<u>Dedicated and Qualified Staff</u>	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
1. Teachers participate in professional organization meetings, workshops and in-service programs to update, share, and refine effective teaching strategies.						
2. Every teacher is trained in Quality Skill Building. (lesson planning strategies)						
3. There is an increase in the number of state and federal grants allocated to the school.						
4. There is an increase on the faculty of the number of teachers holding masters degrees.						
5. There is an increase on the faculty of the number of teachers holding doctorate degrees.						
6. The members of this teaching staff evidence a cooperative and positive effort toward achieving the philosophy, goals and objectives of the District.						
7. The faculty serves as a positive role model to students.						
8. Staff members receive recognition for their exemplary performances.						
9. Staff members believe they are appreciated for the important and critical contributions they make to society.						
10. Resource personnel available within this school district are utilized in the school.						
11. The local school staff evidences a sense of purpose and school wide instructional focus in an atmosphere of trust and professional respect.						
12. A striving for excellence is demonstrated by all school personnel.						
13. Staff members demonstrate commitment to philosophical convictions about the value of public education.						
14. Staff members consistently demonstrate empathy, kindness and concern toward each other and toward students.						

Degree of Agreement

<u>Dedicated and Qualified Staff (cont.)</u>	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
15. Administrators resolve conflict with calm, self-control, and a cooperative spirit.						
16. Teachers value their professional association with other members of the faculty.						
17. Staff members are enthusiastic about their professional performance.						
18. A positive feeling permeates this school.						
<u>Skilled Leadership</u>						
1. Administrators participate in supervision of instruction seminars each year.						
2. Administrators visit the classroom and are competent in evaluating teachers' abilities to plan lessons effectively.						
3. The principal and co-administrators:						
a. Assume responsibility for the educational quality of all school programs.						
b. Identify the principal's role as one of an instructional leader.						
4. The principal and the administrative staff present instructional issues to the faculty for discussion.						
5. The principal and the administrative staff demonstrate a commitment to instructional goals by creating a climate of high expectation.						
6. The principal delineates the authority and role of assistant administrators and department chairpersons related to curriculum decisions.						

	Degree of Agreement					
	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
<u>Skilled Leadership (cont.)</u>						
7. The principal makes decisions based upon the data gathered.						
8. The principal evidence high visibility and availability throughout the school.						
9. The school leadership team composed of administrators and support staff accept responsibility for their roles as educational implementors.						
10. The principal's decisions evidence compromise on process without compromise on principle.						
11. Administrators, and leadership personnel demonstrate techniques for motivating people to perform their duties effectively.						
12. Administrators, and leadership personnel demonstrate techniques for motivating people to perform their duties effectively.						
13. The teaching staff takes pride and responsibility, individually and collectively, in collecting and processing necessary data in an efficient and organized manner.						
<u>Counseling Emphasis</u>						
1. Counselors develop an educational three year or four year plan with each student leading to an increased number of graduated students.						
2. Students are provided a balance in offerings: academic, pre-vocational, and vocational.						
3. Teachers and counselors work cooperatively to provide appropriate student and family support and involvement.						
4. A systematic process exists for notifying parents of student progress toward achieving the graduation requirements.						
5. Parent-teacher conferences result in home-school cooperation aimed at improving student classroom achievement.						

Degree of Agreement

<u>Communication and Involvement</u>	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
1. The principal demonstrates the importance of effective communication with others.						
2. The principal sets the tone of positive interaction among adults and between adults and students.						
3. The principal demonstrates by actions that successful performance is the result of positive attitudes, self-concepts, and peer relationships.						
4. An internal school structure exists including curriculum and ad hoc committees to assist the administration in setting priorities and directions.						
5. The role of department chairperson has expanded in areas of leadership, planning, budgeting, resources, and curriculum involvement.						
6. A clearly defined communication network exists within the school organizational structure which includes teachers, students, support staff, parents, and community support groups.						
7. An increase has occurred in the number of articulation programs with feeder schools and universities.						
8. Parents or guardians have been informed of the course offerings, the homework policy, and the marking practices.						
9. Open discussion and freedom of speech are encouraged; staff members express ideas with professional skill, with assurance, and with kindness but also evidence cooperation when a decision is made.						
10. Among staff members there is an open exchange of ideas, free speech and honest reactions to controversial issues.						

Degree of Agreement

<u>Student Advocacy, Involvement, and Awareness</u>	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
1. Students are provided appropriate instructional assistance at the earliest opportunity in order to meet course and graduation requirements.						
2. Students are provided a program of study which ensures the opportunity to attain entry level job skills.						
3. A well organized and interrelated co-curricular activities program enhances the primary role of the school.						
4. The assembly program supports the school's educational goals.						
5. The instructional program addresses the needs of special education students.						
6. Sufficient opportunities for independent study are provided to students.						
7. Instructional Aides enhance learning opportunities and student participation in classrooms.						
8. The Regional Occupation Program and Work Experience Program offer viable opportunities for participating students.						
9. Students and staff assume responsibility for and take pride in the school's history, appearance, and reputation.						
10. Students are involved in the operation of the school at an appropriate level of expertise and responsibility.						
11. The student population commits itself to excellence and senses the concept of "student advocacy" among all adult personnel.						
12. The student population senses a caring yet directive staff.						
13. The student population expresses ownership in the school because of involvement at the students' level of expertise.						

Degree of Agreement

<u>Student Advocacy, Involvement and Awareness (cont.)</u>	Highest (5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	Lowest (1)	No Opinion
14. Planned and systematic programs of recognition of students academic performance occur.						
15. Staff members demonstrate caring, concerned, and positive attitudes and are able to work cooperatively as student advocates.						
<u>Positive and Safe Climate</u>						
1. The principal maintains an orderly, organized, and safe climate conducive to teaching and learning.						
2. The administrative staff maintains a clearly stated discipline code.						
3. The school has reduced the number of incidents of vandalism.						
4. The school has reduced the number of incidents of violence.						
5. The school has reduced the number of incidents of substance abuse.						
6. Students are appropriately supervised before school.						
7. Students are appropriately supervised during instructional periods.						
8. Students are appropriately supervised at nutrition and lunch.						
9. Students are appropriately supervised after school.						
10. Student responsibility is promoted by enforcing a clearly stated list of student responsibilities and consequences when responsibilities are not met.						

Degree of Agreement

Parent and Community Involvement	Highest				Lowest	No
	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	Opinion
1. Parents are informed of student's lack of effort or performance as soon as such behavior is evident and at required times when the student is in danger of failing.						
2. An adult support base exists in the PTA, School Advisory Council, Booster Groups, community organizations, alumni, and informed parent population.						
<u>An Evaluation Strand</u>						
1. A school-wide needs assessment is cooperatively developed by administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and students.						
2. The measurable objectives provide statistics which substantiate improved performance.						
3. Comparisons of scores from California Assessment Program, California Test of Basic Skills, Advanced Placement, and Scholastic Aptitudes tests provide an indication of improved student performance.						
4. Equipment, supplies, and instructional technology are regularly reviewed to determine what areas need improvement.						
5. School staff and parent advisory council regularly review the "Self Assessment Process" and the progress toward the goals of the school and the District.						
6. Improvement in the performance of graduated students at the freshman college level is occurring.						
7. The number of students who are National Merit Scholars, National Achievement Scholars, and National Hispanic Scholars. continues to increase.						
8. Student enrollment in advanced academic classes continues to increase.						
9. The number of students who take and pass three years of mathematics, three years of science, and four years of foreign language continues to increase.						

Degree of Agreement

An Evaluation Strand (cont.)	Highest				Lowest	No
	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	Opinion
10. The number of students who take and pass three years of vocational educational classes in one vocational area continues to increase.						
11. Test results are used to recommend modifications or changes in the instructional program.						
12. The performance of graduated students in their first job in business or industry continues to improve.						
13. Most students in the Bilingual/ESL Program make a transition into all English program within two years.						
14. The school has implemented a standard program of teacher evaluation which incorporates sound lesson plans, learning theory, and methodology.						
15. An individual school profile delineates the present status of the school in base line data and provides the means to evaluate student growth on the curricular continuum from entrance level to exit ability.						
16. Procedures are established for identifying school problems and facilitating change.						
17. Guidelines for implementing Stull Bill procedures are followed.						
18. Attendance of all students has increased.						
19. A reduction in the drop-out rate has occurred.						
20. Parents and community groups (SCAC, Region/ Division CAC, District Council, etc.) involvement in providing advice on educational issues is increasing.						
21. Staff makes the accomplishments of students and the schools available to the public.						
22. Department/grade level chairpersons involvement in providing advice on educational issues is increasing.						
23. Strategies are implemented for building trust among peers, teachers, community members, students, and support personnel.						